

ĀNEÑJASAPPĀYASUTTAM

Suitable for the imperturbable

MN 106

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Buddha was living among the Kurus, in a town of the Kurus called Kammāsadhamma. There the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus: “Bhikkhus”. “Yes, Bhante,” those bhikkhus replied. The Blessed One said this: “Bhikkhus, sense-desires are impermanent, empty, false, deceptive. That which is fraudulent, bhikkhus, is the utterance of a fool. Bhikkhus, whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires in lives to come—both of these are Māra’s realm, Māra’s province, Māra’s bait, Māra’s feeding ground. Here these evil unwholesome things lead to mental covetousness, ill-will and anger. They create an obstacle for a noble disciple in training here. In this case, bhikkhus, a noble disciple reflects thus: ‘Whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires in lives to come—both of these are Māra’s realm, Māra’s province, Māra’s bait, Māra’s feeding ground. Here these evil unwholesome things leads to mental covetousness, ill-will and anger. They create an obstacle for a noble disciple in training here. What if I were to dwell with a mind that is large, expanded, having mentally determined to surmount the world. Dwelling with a mind that is large, expanded, having mentally determined to surmount the world, there will be none of those evil unwholesome mental covetousness, ill-will and anger. Having abandoned these my mind will be unlimited, unbounded and well-developed.’ When he practises in this way, having often dwelled like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the imperturbable now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the imperturbable. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the first way which is suitable for the imperturbable.

“Furthermore, bhikkhus, a noble disciple reflects thus: ‘Whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires in lives to come; whatever matter, all matter is the four great elements and from the four great elements matter is assumed’. When he practises in this way, having often dwelled like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the imperturbable now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the imperturbable. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the second way which is suitable for the imperturbable.

“Furthermore, bhikkhus, a noble disciple reflects thus: ‘Whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires in lives to come; whatever matter here-&-now and whatever matter in lives to come; whatever perception-of-matter here-&-now and whatever perception-of-matter in lives to come—both of these are impermanent. Whatever is impermanent is not worth delighting in, not worth welcoming, not worth becoming attached to’. When he practises in this

way, having often dwelled like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the imperturbable now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the imperturbable. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the third way which is suitable for the imperturbable.

Furthermore, bhikkhus, a noble disciple reflects thus: 'Whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desires in lives to come; whatever matter here-&-now and whatever matter in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-matter here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-matter in lives to come; and whatever perceptions-of-imperturbability—all are perceptions. Wherever these cease without remainder: this is peaceful, this is sublime—namely, the domain of nothingness'. For one who practises in this way, he is one who often dwells like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the domain of nothingness now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the domain of nothingness. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the first way which is suitable for the domain of nothingness.

Furthermore, bhikkhus, a noble disciple, gone to the forest, or gone to the root of a tree, or gone to an empty dwelling, reflects thus: 'This is empty of self or of what belongs to self'. For one who practises in this way, he is one who often dwells like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the domain of nothingness now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the domain of nothingness. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the second way which is suitable for the domain of nothingness.

Furthermore, bhikkhus, a noble disciple reflects thus: 'I am not in anything, anywhere, for anyone, and there isn't anything mine anywhere, for anyone'. For one who practises in this way, he is one who often dwells like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the domain of nothingness now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the domain of nothingness. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the third way which is suitable for the domain of nothingness.

Furthermore, bhikkhus, a noble disciple reflects thus: 'Whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in the lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desire here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desire in lives to come; whatever matter here-&-now and whatever matter in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-matter here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-matter in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-imperturbability and whatever perceptions-of-the-domain-of-nothingness—all of that is perception. Wherever this ceases without remainder, that is peaceful, that is sublime—that is, the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception'. For one who practises in this way, he is one who often dwells like this, his mind develops clarity in this domain. With clarity, either he enters upon the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception now, or he inclines towards it with understanding. On the break up of the body after death, it is possible that the consciousness involved with this will reach the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This, bhikkhus, is declared to be the way which is suitable for the domain of nothingness".

When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One: “Here, Bhante, a bhikkhu practises in this way: ‘It might not be and it might not be mine; it will not be, it will not be mine; whatever there is, whatever exists—that I am abandoning’. In this way, he obtains indifference. Bhante, could he be fully extinguished, or might he not be fully extinguished?” “Ānanda, in this case, some bhikkhus might be fully extinguished and some bhikkhus might not be fully extinguished.” “Bhante, what is the reason, what is the cause why some bhikkhus might be fully extinguished and some bhikkhus might not be fully extinguished?” “Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu practises in this way: ‘It might not be and it might not be mine; it will not be, it will not be mine; whatever there is, whatever exists—that I am abandoning’. In this way, he obtains indifference. He delights in this indifference, welcomes it, remains attached to it. For one delighting in this indifference, welcoming it, remaining attached to it, there is consciousness dependent on it, assumed by it. Ānanda, a bhikkhu with-assumption is not fully extinguished”. “But where does that assuming bhikkhu assume?” “Ānanda, the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception”. “Surely this assuming bhikkhu assumes the best assumption?” “Indeed, Ānanda, this assuming bhikkhus assumes the best assumption. This, Ānanda, is the best assumption, that is—the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.”

“Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu practises in this way: ‘It might not be, and it might not be mine; it will not be, it will not be mine; whatever there is, whatever exists—that I am abandoning’. In this way, he obtains indifference. He does not delight in this indifference, he does not welcome it, he does not remain attached to it. For one not delighting in this indifference, not welcoming, not remaining attached to it, consciousness is not dependent on it, not assumed by it. Ānanda, a bhikkhu without-assumption is fully extinguished”.

“Wonderful, Bhante! Marvellous, Bhante! Truly it is has been declared by the Blessed One the means by which there is the crossing of the flood. But, Bhante, which is noble liberation?” “Here, Ānanda, a noble disciple reflects thus: ‘Whatever sense-desires here-&-now and whatever sense-desires in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-sense-desire here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-sense-desire in lives to come; whatever matter here-&-now and whatever matter in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-matter here-&-now and whatever perceptions-of-matter in lives to come; whatever perceptions-of-imperturbability and whatever perceptions-of-the-domain-of-nothingness and whatever perceptions-of-the-domain-of-neither-perception-nor-non-perception—this is personality, the extent of personality. This is deathlessness, that is: liberation of mind without assumptions. Thus, Ānanda, the way suitable for the imperturbable has been taught by me, the way suitable for the domain of nothingness has been taught, the way suitable for the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception has been taught by means of which there is the crossing of the flood, noble liberation has been taught. Ānanda, whatever should be done by the teacher for the welfare of the disciples, compassionate, out of compassion, this has been done by me for you. These, Ānanda, are roots of trees, these are empty dwelling. Meditate, Ānanda, do not be negligent, do not be one who regrets later. This is our instructions to you”.

This is what the Blessed One. Gladdened, the venerable Ānanda delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

Udāyin, there are these five cords-of-sense-desire. Which five? Forms cognizable by the eye which are wished for, desired, agreeable, enticing, accompanied by sense-desire, causing excitement; sounds cognizable by the ear... smells cognizable by the nose... tastes cognizable by the tongue... touches cognizable by the body which are wished for, desired, agreeable, enticing, accompanied by sense-desire, causing excitement. These, Udāyin are the five cords-of-sense-desire. Udāyin, whatever pleasure and happiness arises dependent on these five cords-of-sense-desire—this is called the pleasure-of-sense-desire, a shit-pleasure, an ordinary person's pleasure, an ignoble pleasure. It should not be followed, it should not developed, it should not be made much of. 'One should be afraid of this pleasure', I say.

(MN 66)

Kaccāna, there are these five cords-of-sense-desire. Which five? Forms cognizable by the eye which are wished for, desired, agreeable, enticing, accompanied by sense-desire, causing excitement; sounds cognizable by the ear... smells cognizable by the nose... tastes cognizable by the tongue... touches cognizable by the body which are wished for, desired, agreeable, enticing, accompanied by sense-desire, causing excitement. These, Kaccāna are the five cords-of-sense-desire. Kaccāna, whatever pleasure and happiness arises dependent on these five cords-of-sense-desire—this is called the pleasure-of-sense-desire. Thus with sense-desires there is the pleasure-of-sense-desire, the foremost pleasure-of-sense-desire out of the sense-desires is there declared foremost.

(MN 80)

Bhikkhus, a thought-of-sense-desire arises with a foundation, not without a foundation...

And how, bhikkhus, does a thought-of-sense-desire arise with a foundation, not without a foundation?... Bhikkhus, dependent on the element-of-sense-desire, a perception-of-sense-desire arises. Dependent on the perception-of-sense-desire, an intention-of-sense-desire arises. Dependent on the intention-of-sense-desire, a desire-of-sense-desire arises. Dependent on the desire-of-sense-desire, a fever-of-sense-desire arises. Dependent on the fever-of-sense-desire, a search-of-sense-desire arises. Bhikkhus, with the search-of-sense-desire, a searching uninstructed ordinary person practises wrongly in three places: by body, by speech, by mind.

(SN 14:12)